

## Billings District 2 School Trustees – Recommending Four Candidates:

**We are depending upon YOU to forward this to people in Billings School District 2**

- Ballots mailed out – Wednesday, April 13
- Election date – Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Register to vote or check on your registration [here](#).
- **\*\* Incumbent, Appointed** to the position by the School Board, **Endorsed** by the Billings Education Association.
- [Election Zone Map](#) – (You can only vote for those in your district.)
- [“Four Parents File for School Board to Bring Change to Billings School District 2” \(Evelyn Pyburn – Helpful article\)](#)
- See also full voters guide [here](#)

**All these candidates** (Zone 3: Shannon Johnson Zone 4: Chad Nelson Zone 5: Kristen Gilfeather Zone 7: John VonLangen) have professional careers and kids in the school district. They all 4 support parents’ rights in education but also champion partnerships between parents and teachers. They are pro kids, parents, teachers, and public education. They all have unique personalities and strengths but they value education and are against mandates. They are concerned about the *lack of transparency* with the current board, the disrespect being shown to parents. They see the need for the school board to work on *regaining the trust* from the community. They are deeply concerned about *issues such as CRT, BLM, and other equity and inclusion issues* – that at best are *leaking into the classrooms*. As the relative of a Billings teacher, I can tell you these *issues are on fire* in the high schools.

**\*Take the time to see them interviewed LIVE** [\\*here](#) and learn more about them.

**It’s the first time in seven years that a board position has been contested.** Two years ago, four of the trustees simply retook their seats after election night because no one ran against them.

**The four candidates we are endorsing** are in **BLUE**, their opponents are in **RED**

**Zone 3 (North Billings Heights) Shannon Johnson.** ([Learn more on her website](#))

This lady has been working hard for months and is well informed. Shannon is a very articulate, well-informed parent. She has two children in high school. Shannon has an extensive background in business and is trained in traditional naturopathy about which she is an author. She also has her own coffee business – Campfire Blend Coffee. She works for SCL Health as a director of operations for clinics in rural areas. She is a native of Billings, although she and her husband, who is a policeman, lived for a period in Boise, ID. for a period of time.

Issues: ([Learn more on her website](#))

- I am for *parental involvement* - parents should be allowed back in the schools and given a voice both in school board meetings AND with teachers.
- Communication and *partnership* - This is a relationship that must be fostered and encouraged by our board to support the relationship between parents and teachers to work together, and not against one another.
- *Transparent Curriculum* - FREE of Critical Race Theory, or any element that remotely relates to or resembles the teaching of this ideal.
- *Teachers* should feel psychologically safe to go to school and work in an environment free from threats of losing their jobs for speaking up for what they believe in, not forced to enforce rules that resemble nothing more than bullying.
- An END to 1905 (Masking mandates); the result of which Superintendent Upham ***was given supreme power and authority to act alone in a political decision*** that affected the lives of all 16,000 students within this district that you and I both serve.

**Zone 3: Theresa Larsen:**

- Theresa labeled herself as conservative in a recent meeting - but was endorsed by the Billings Education Association (that is anything but conservative) after they interviewed her.

- Essentially thought the Board handled COVID very well.
- Thought the people who confronted the board were out of line.
- She favors looking at *Balanced Calendar schooling* (year -round with breaks, same number of days) that has its pros and cons but is much more costly. Its primary concern is low-income families.
- She is in favor of *sex education* in schools. Many conservatives view sex education in schools to be the point at which “*the camel gets his nose into the tent*” [A small, seemingly innocuous act or decision that will lead to much larger, more serious, and less desirable consequences down the line.] They see that as a parenting issue.
- At the meeting, she was quiet about issues like BLM, CRT, or diversity and inclusion issues. For those, you would have to look further.
- A late-comer to the process – not sure who recruited her.

#### **Zone 4 (Central Billings) Chad Nelson ([website](#))**

Chad is a very conservative, concerned father. He has particular interests in the budget matters. Chad has paid attention to issues in our schools, even some of the books in the library. He says “We have seen in the news that school boards are becoming front and center. I believe that it is imperative that we have elected officials, not special interest appointees.”

**Here are the agenda items** I intend to focus on:

- Transparency in School District 2.
- Parental Rights.
- Supports school choice
- Cutting waste and prioritizing spending.
- *Promoting our system of government, our history, and our religious freedoms.*
- Finding opportunities for our children.
- Monitoring the actions of the Superintendent.
- Watching for the infringement of rights, laws, and decency.

#### **\*\* Zone 4: Zack Terakedis:**

- Got *appointed* to the board by the board in 2021.

- Opposes School Choice
- He said on his application that he's number 1 role was to oversee the superintendent.
- Very first board meeting he joined the unanimous vote of the other board members to give policy 1905(mask policy) fully to the discretion of the superintendent.
- Voted with the board to keep two sexually graphic books in the school library.
- Has never been in a *contested* election.

### **Zone 5 (Central Billings) [Kristen Gilfeather Website](#)**

"Knowing I have one in school and one anxiously awaiting to be old enough for school, I see the value in participating in the future of my children's education. The best way to get involved is to take a seat at the table. *I want to be known for always doing what is right over what is fast, fun or easy, for being authentic and vulnerable, for giving grace to others and for showing up.*" If you listen to her being interviewed, you realize she has tons of experience working with and administering people and working on boards.

#### **If elected I will:**

- Act with integrity
- Demand accountability
- Listen to you
- Zone 5 has *not had an elected member since 2013* – it's past time.

Learn more about Kristen on her web site.

#### **\*\* Zone 5: [Scott McCulloch](#):**

- Was *appointed* to the board by the board in 2018.
- Formerly the Billings *Teacher's union president*.
- He is retired.
- He *joined* the unanimous vote of the other board members to give policy 1905(*mask policy*) fully to the discretion of the superintendent.
- Voted with the board to keep two *sexually graphic books* in the school library.

- Has never been in a *contested* election.

**Zone 7 – (West Billings) [John VonLangen](#) ([his website](#))**

John has expressed particular concerns about the curriculum issues. Jon says:  
*“Parents must have a voice in their children's education. Parents cannot sit on the sidelines hoping for the current Board of Trustees to actually listen to them. It's time to change from hope to action. It's time to get involved. It's time to make our voices, as parents, heard”.*

I'm a proud dad of three (3) children in Billings School District 2.

**I'm running for School Trustee to ensure that:**

- Children are our first priority.
- Parents have a voice in the education of their children.
- Billings School District 2 operates in an open and transparent manner including transparency in the budget and curriculum.
- School 2 District should not be in a *state of emergency*.
- Policy 1905 should be terminated and that masking should remain optional."

I am here to represent the residents of Zone 7 and provide practical, common-sense oversight of our Billings School District 2.

**\*\*Zone 7: Brian Yates:**

- He was *appointed* to the board by the board in 2018.
- He joined the unanimous *vote* of the other board members to give policy 1905(*mask policy*) fully to the discretion of the superintendent.
- Voted with the board to keep two *sexually graphic* books in the school library.
- Has never been in a *contested election*.

- **My Seven Principles of Voting:**

- **1<sup>st</sup>. My bottom line** – is the candidate **primarily conservative** that will promote Christian based values? My only SINGLE ISSUE is LIFE.
- **2<sup>nd</sup>. Never vote for a Democrat.** The Democratic party is now ruled by socialists. If the candidate is one, they are disqualified. If they are too

uninformed to know what the party is, they don't belong in office. And, they will be pressured to vote in lock-step.

- **3<sup>rd</sup>. Never vote based on friendships** – vote based on principles and values. Separate relational-emotional interests from principles.
- **4<sup>rd</sup>. Don't get in a hurry to vote.** Liberals love early and mail in voting. So many times, I hear *"I would never have voted for him if I had known..."* and the information came out after they voted.
- **5<sup>th</sup>. Don't rely on mailer information** you get in your mailbox. Do your homework and listen to people you trust. Case in point – Penny Ronning won in Ward 4 in 2016. Her flyers made her sound **like a Reagan conservative** and she is a Progressives activist, running for Congress.
- **6<sup>th</sup>. Be discerning, listen between the lines.** Liberals know they **can't win on Socialist values** – they are masters at sounding conservative. Messaging conservative values in short sound bites is difficult. Don't be a sucker for emotional appeals.
- **7<sup>th</sup>.Vote Principles not Gender** – oh yes, many will vote for a woman ONLY because she is a woman. Of all the women I have known on the City Council the last three elections, only one was and is consistently conservative. Most were radically liberal.